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ABSTRACT

This study examined teacher leadership as a step beyond the traditional teacher role, developing a profile of the teacher leader. Formal and informal teacher leaders responded to statements that revealed identifiable descriptors of characteristics or attributes of effective teacher leaders who lead beyond the classroom. These descriptors were examined, organized, and classified into thematic categories. Specific categories supported interpersonal skills and intrapersonal sense of self, as well as habits of mind. The findings revealed eight identifiable attributes of teacher leaders, which comprise the basic components of the teacher leader profile. The teacher leader profile identifies individuals who are creative, efficacious/effective, flexible, and lifelong learners who have a sense of humor, are willing to take responsible risks, and have good intrapersonal sense and strong interpersonal skills. Examination of the patterns identified at each developmental level suggested a gradual maturation of strength in each teacher leader attribute over the years, from the pre-college level through their teacher education and into their teaching years. (Contains 13 references.) (SM)

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Teacher Leadership:

A Profile to Identify the Potential

Intrapersonal Sense		Interpersonal Skills
Finds Humor		Takes Risks
Creative		Flexible
Efficacious/Effective		Lifelong Learner

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Fall, 2001

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Teacher Leadership: A Profile to Identify the Potential

Mary Ellen Krisko, Ph.D.

Abstract...

Teachers who are effective leaders, leading beyond the walls of the classroom without being removed from direct student contact, have identifiable characteristics. All aspects of life experiences provide opportunities to acquire the demeanor and skills to assume leadership responsibilities. There is a means for identification of potential teacher leaders through attributes determined in a teacher leadership profile.

Teachers who have a passion for learning are not satisfied with a passive school climate that creates boundaries within the classroom walls, limiting collaboration and stifling the development of professional collegial relationships. Many teachers, overwhelmed with numerous routine tasks that demand valuable time, have become complacent with the position as the "traditional teacher," isolating themselves in the classroom. Yet, others are willing to step outside the comfort zone of isolation, taking risks and overcoming barriers to ensure a positive student learning atmosphere.

Administrators are leaders of leaders, learning and leading with teachers who have an untapped reservoir of potential expertise waiting to be unleashed and anxious to be involved. Tradition has prevented administrators from exploiting the strengths of teachers. For successful school improvement, teachers must be encouraged to take the initiative to change the traditional trend, to get involved in professional conversations, to accept the responsibility for student learning, and to work toward a common goal as a teacher, learner, and leader.

Identifiable attributes of teacher leaders ascertain the basic components of a teacher leadership profile, identifying highly effective individuals who are creative, efficacious, flexible, and lifelong learners and who find humor, are willing to take responsible risks, and have good intrapersonal sense and strong interpersonal skills. Using a teacher leadership profile affords an opportunity for teachers as well as administrators to identify the potential in an individual to assume teacher leadership responsibilities. Teachers showing strength in the teacher leader profile are choice candidates to participate in a leadership capacity to initiate change in an effective professional learning community.

Leadership experiences in early years provide opportunities for individuals to establish and build confidence, enhancing leadership attributes and skills. Effective teacher leaders focus primarily on being reflective practitioners solving problems around teaching and learning, encourage shared responsibilities in school governance, and value collegial involvement through effective collaboration and communication. As lifelong learners teacher leaders continue to enhance and polish skills, approaching problems as challenges and challenges as opportunities.

Teacher Leadership: A Profile to Identify the Potential

Mary Ellen Krisko, Ph.D.

Background...

True reform calls for a process in which change is dynamic, rather than a static, one-time mandate. For change to take place within the educational structure, school restructuring needs to continue to involve teachers, the one group of individuals who are at the heart of educational reform, who can create, carry out, and evaluate (Hart & Baptist, 1996). Significant change does not occur without full involvement. Reform is not effective with mandates from the top seeping down to the classroom (Lashway, 1998). Teacher involvement requires expanding the teachers' role and creating collegial environments (Trachtman, 1993). Thus, school restructuring redefines the role of the teacher, resulting in a paradigm shift involving a change in perception and interpretation of school governance and leadership.

Teachers are directly connected to student learning, and productive change cannot take place without teachers becoming involved in the process. Teachers are the center of the school community and need to assume the responsibility of helping colleagues initiate, support, and sustain a community of learners and leaders. As leaders in the classroom affording teachers the opportunity to extend leadership skills beyond the classroom encourages professional growth and empowerment to become more resourceful as skilled pedagogical professionals. Although the involvement of teachers is a giant step in a positive direction, the continuing futile attempt at school reform still lies in the hands of mandates, bequeathed from state departments through local school boards, superintendents, and principals to teachers. With administration overwhelmed with increased validation for student learning, teacher leaders have informally emerged to assume some of these responsibilities extending beyond assigned classroom duties.

Concerns...

Traditional school cultures have created passive, uncommitted staff members who lack ownership in educational practices and confidence to extend their leadership skills beyond the classroom to create and sustain change. With a paradigm shift in school culture by transforming a traditional school to a professional learning community, teachers can extend their leadership skills and create a collaborative environment that is open to communication and appropriate collegial relationships. This type of paradigm shift results in the emergence of teacher leaders nurturing an environment of learning by supporting colleagues, participating in shared decision-making, and sharing knowledge.

Modeling, facilitating, and initiating learning by moving out of a comfort zone to become a teacher leader outside the classroom is not an easy task for a teacher who is accustomed to a non-threatening classroom environment. There are two practices that have instituted the designation of a teacher as a teacher leader. Either the teacher initiates the responsibility of a leadership position when there is a need to solve a problem and to develop an appropriate

solution compatible with a learning environment, or an administrator assigns or coerces the teacher to shoulder the responsibility of a leadership position.

Many principals maintain isolating, restrictive environments for teachers, preventing little opportunity for communication, collaboration, and collegiality. Often these restrictions are not by choice but are due to various daily routine factors imposed upon the school community. If teachers are isolated from the rest of the school community and if they are treated as mere workers implementing set procedures, there is little continuity and growth within the learning process. Students learn by modeling, and when learning is not modeled, this message is sent to students. The egalitarian ethic prevents teachers from sharing skills gained from experience and expertise. Teachers, who are willing to assume a leadership role outside the classroom, involving their peers in shared decision-making, mentoring, and collaboration, for example, initiate innovation, creativity, and continuity in the learning environment. Group collaboration efforts establish a climate of change that fosters attitudes that sustain a viable learning atmosphere.

Many teachers have become far too complacent with the position as the "traditional teacher," isolating themselves in the classroom and withdrawing from the school community. These teachers are overwhelmed with numerous routine tasks that demand valuable time. On the other hand, others, burgeoned as well with routine responsibilities, are willing to step outside the comfort zone of isolation, take risks, and overcome barriers to ensure a positive learning atmosphere. Teachers who have a passion for learning are not satisfied with a passive school climate that creates boundaries within the classroom walls, limits collaboration, and stifles the development of professional collegial relationships. To extend a teacher's skills outside the classroom allows one to exercise leadership skills that have been effectively implemented with students.

Administrators need to realize there is an untapped reservoir of potential directly in front of them, waiting to be unleashed - anxious to be involved in the learning community. Tradition has prevented administrators, who rely on their own expertise as instructional leaders, from exploiting the strengths of teachers. There have been many attempts to achieve successful school reform with administrators "jumping through the hoops" at the right time and in the right place, ignoring or downplaying the responsibility of the teacher in a learning community. The bureaucratic, hierarchical traditions of administrative leadership and the outmoded, egalitarian ethic prevents the opportunity for teachers to share their talents, expertise, and skills with their colleagues. Thus, for successful school improvement, collegial relationships must be established, which can only be accomplished by the development of healthy learning communities of collaborative leaders and learners.

The interpretation of the position of leadership is often seen as a statement of power rather than that of responsibility. Hierarchical-type administrators stifle teacher communication and collaboration, preventing a shift of professional responsibility to initiate change. Principals cannot handle all of the management as well as the instructional leadership responsibilities required for a successful program while maintaining the demands of a continuously changing society. Those,

who tap into the knowledge and expertise of teachers, encouraging learning and developing trust, form a learning atmosphere with a commitment toward common goals and policies. Principals need to become aware that empowering teachers and allowing them to share their talents and expertise promotes learning and initiates change.

If school administrators find the need to empower teachers to become active participants in a learning environment, they have difficulty identifying the potential of teachers as leaders to appropriately and successfully initiate change. They have concerns identifying teachers as leaders and are apprehensive to select teachers to assume responsibility of a leadership position. If teachers are given leadership responsibility, they are not provided appropriate training. Teachers, accustomed to the protective isolation of the classroom, have difficulty recognizing their own potential and are reluctant to accept leadership responsibilities. Realizing the need for change, from isolation to involvement, few teachers are taking the initiative to become actively involved and to assume leadership responsibilities by tapping into their reservoir of leadership experiences by overcoming obstacles and soliciting support. Unfortunately, when teachers become leaders, they move out of the classroom into an administrative position losing contact with student learning, adjusting their pedagogical direction and waiving their identity as a teacher. Thus, teachers have little opportunity to ascend a teacher career ladder without relinquishing contact with their students and their colleagues.

Leadership...

Effective leaders are willing to invest in the school's organization, understand and work with others, and share their expertise. They predict direction, examining the needs to determine the focus of work. Leaders educate others about leadership, encouraging those who are willing to assume leadership positions. Leadership is not manipulation or power; leadership is a sense of judgment, being aware of empowerment to bring about significant change.

Implementing a teacher leader program in a learning community supports the need to move away from the traditional isolation of teachers and lack of collegial communication. Teachers should have the opportunity to develop and share their expertise, mentor those requiring help, and participate in shared decision-making. Providing the option to achieve a greater level of expertise encourages the retention of quality teachers and motivates teachers to continue to grow professionally. Teachers leaders are willing to overcome the obstacles and to take the risk in a stewardship type of leadership position to ensure an atmosphere of student and collegial learning.

Teacher leadership is a step beyond the traditional teacher role. Teachers are potential leaders who can be instrumental in initiating and implementing a major paradigm shift from a traditional school to an effective learning community. Teachers must be encouraged to take the initiative to change the traditional trend, to get involved in professional conversations, to accept the responsibility for student learning, and to work toward a common goal as a teacher, learner, and leader. Teacher leadership is a key factor for the entire school culture to change to one that exercises a learning community atmosphere with a principal as a formative leader who implements facilitative and transformational leadership strategies, empowering teachers with

responsibilities that directly affect collegiality, collaboration, leading, and learning.

Developing a Teacher Leader Profile...

A study was conducted to examine teacher leadership as a step beyond the traditional teacher role. The main focus of the study was to develop a profile of a teacher leader and to show that teachers, who identify with this profile, are potential leaders who can be instrumental in initiating and implementing a major paradigm shift from a traditional school to an effective learning community.

Participants in the study spontaneously responded to statements to reveal identifiable descriptors of characteristics or attributes of effective teacher leaders who lead beyond the classroom. Identified descriptors were examined, organized, and classified into thematic categories based on the responses of strengths. Specific categories developed from the information collected supported interpersonal skills and intrapersonal sense as well as Habits of Mind (Costa & Kallick, 2000), similar to habits of thoughts proposed by John Dewey.

Descriptors of identified categories developed during the process set the tone of the demeanor of a teacher as a leader in informal or formal settings. Applying past knowledge suggests using experiences to improve, solve problems, and appreciate school culture. Experiences from the past provide valuable information when new situations occur. Appreciating school culture with respect for the history of the past is critical, and considering school culture during the decision-making process is necessary for commitment or buy-in from the individuals involved. Communicating with clarity focuses on strengths of precise written and oral communication by avoiding over generalizations and non-descriptive words with emphasis is on the ability to prioritize and analyze.

Finding humor places value on having a sense of humor and involves the need to laugh and laugh at oneself. Gathering data through senses includes being alert and open, acutely aware of the school environment through observation. Creating, imagining, and innovating stimulates and generates ideas and solutions. Listening with understanding affords others' perception of a concern or issue hearing beyond the words. Through reflective listening accepting change, having an open mind, and showing empathy reflect a genuine respect for the feelings of others. Those who are not quick to judge and think before acting manage impulsivity through patience and wisdom. Persisting includes taking tasks to completion and is indicative of not giving up easily. Ambiguity is not distracting when focusing on learning through problem solving. Recognizing and solving problems are the focus on questioning and posing problems.

Remaining open to learning involves researching for new ways, resisting complacency, having a passion for learning, and always eager to learn. Appreciating and finding the positive aspects of life and considering the world holistically with interest and enthusiasm is indicative of responding with awe to interests, issues, and experiences. Constantly striving for accuracy reveals pride in the teaching profession while maintaining high standards and expectations through organization, vision, and loyalty. As responsible risk takers, individuals accept uncertainty venturing into the unknown, are willing to push the limits stretching boundaries, go against the norm or

tradition, and initiate change. Through metacognition, thinking about thinking, options are considered and ideas, thoughts, feelings, and actions of others are valued with dignity and respect. Thinking flexibly allows for an individual to maintain an open mind for change, to overcome obstacles, to generate alternatives, and to assess and evaluate.

As a team player, an individual who is sensitive to others' needs thinks interdependently and draws upon the power of group and collegial relationships. Closely related to interdependent thinking is an interpersonal category that includes relating and sharing with others in a collegial atmosphere, yet places increased responsibility on an individual through influencing others, collaborating, facilitating, and cooperating with students, staff, family, and community. As a self-motivated, humble, tolerant, confident, and enthusiastic individual, the intrapersonal category focuses on an individual's integrity and commitment.

Data was collected from each participant for each category at the pre-college, college and teaching, and teacher leader developmental levels. The percentage of strength was determined at each developmental level, which implied the breadth of overall levels of achievement of leadership skill development as indicated in Table 1. During the compilation of data it became apparent that participants showing strengths in one particular category had paralleling strengths in related or overlapping categories.

Table 1: Percent of Responses Showing Strength at Each Developmental Level

Category Identified	Pre-College Level	College/Teaching Level	Teacher Leader Level
Applying Past Knowledge	51%	74%	96%
Communicating with Clarity	67%	80%	85%
Creating/Imagining/Innovating	74%	83%	85%
Finding Humor	85%	91%	98%
Gathering Data through Senses	81%	89%	91%
Interpersonal	83%	85%	93%
Intrapersonal	89%	93%	98%
Listening with Understanding	60%	78%	85%
Managing Impulsivity	53%	83%	89%
Persisting	83%	89%	91%
Questioning/Posing Problems	53%	83%	96%
Remaining Open to Learning	77%	91%	95%
Responding with Awe	71%	74%	85%
Striving for Accuracy	84%	95%	97%
Taking Responsible Risks	65%	85%	93%
Thinking about Thinking	71%	91%	95%
Thinking Flexibly	64%	81%	93%
Thinking Interdependently	80%	90%	96%

At the Pre-College Level the intrapersonal category, supported by commitment, confidence, and self-respect, indicated the greatest strength of the participants. During the succeeding developmental level, College and Teaching, participants substantially gained strength in all areas with emphasis on striving for accuracy, followed by the intrapersonal category. At the

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Teacher Leader Level the percentage of each category increased in participant strength supporting characteristics for a teacher leader profile.

Categories were grouped, identifying patterns according to strands of categories related or overlapping. Numerous strands overlapped into different patterns. The patterns identified were named according to a common theme, indicating characteristics of individuals who are creative, efficacious, flexible, and lifelong learners, who find humor, are willing to take risks, and have interpersonal skills and intrapersonal sense. The identified patterns were determined as attributes of a teacher leader, supporting the foundation for a teacher leader profile.

Observing the percentage of strength for each pattern chronologically from one level to another indicated a developmental change in experiences, attitudes, interests, and relationships a teacher encounters during the process of becoming a teacher leader. The developmental growth of each pattern supports the importance of the pattern in order to determine a teacher leader profile, as indicated in Table 2. With significant emphasis on specific skills the potential of a teacher leader is recognized allowing identified patterns to represent attributes of a teacher leader.

Table 2: Percent of Participants Showing Strength at Each Developmental Level

Pre-College Level		College/Teaching Level		Teacher Leader Level	
Creative	73%	Creative	86%	Creative	93%
Efficacious	64%	Efficacious	82%	Efficacious	90%
Finds Humor	77%	Finds Humor	86%	Finds Humor	93%
Flexible	65%	Flexible	84%	Flexible	92%
Interpersonal Skills	78%	Interpersonal Skills	86%	Interpersonal Skills	94%
Intrapersonal Sense	88%	Intrapersonal Sense	92%	Intrapersonal Sense	98%
Lifelong Learning	66%	Lifelong Learning	85%	Lifelong Learning	93%
Takes Risks	61%	Takes Risks	82%	Takes Risks	88%

During the interview participants were afforded the opportunity to subjectively respond to experiences at various developmental levels in achieving leadership skills. Participants addressed the need for skills to collaboratively share their expertise and experiences through problem solving and decision-making issues. Experiences, problems, challenges, and responsibilities were considered to be opportunities.

Participants initiated involvement in overall school or district programs while maintaining classroom contact. As lifelong learners teacher leaders visibly develop, improve, and model their own willingness and enthusiasm to continuously learn. Participants continuously challenge their skills showing the initiative to implement new, innovative ideas to create a democratic learning atmosphere. As responsible risk-takers participants express the need to take risks, but many are reluctant to jeopardize their career as an educator.

Examination of the patterns identified at each developmental level suggested a gradual maturation of strength in each teacher leader attribute, as shown in Figure 1. During the formal years at the pre-college level, participants indicated strength in all identified attributes, but the

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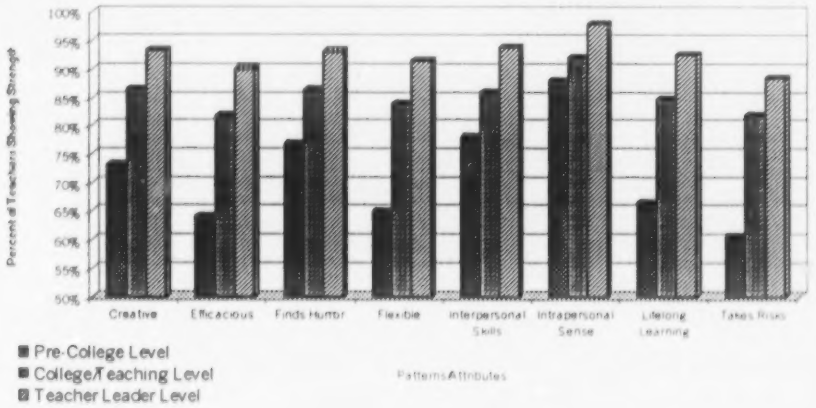
degree of strength was far less than at higher levels of development implying that at an early age exposure to leadership skills is apparent but not entirely complete. Early exposure to working with others, developing confidence, finding humor in experiences, and being creative and willing to experiment provided opportunities to excel when young. Individuals who had the potential as a teacher leader had sufficient discipline to take advantage of opportunities that encourage leadership skills. Stepping out of one's comfort zone beyond the limits of the acceptable norm, encountering obstacles that impose on what is acceptable by peers, and not being deterred with the possibility of failure were challenges that enhanced one's leadership abilities. Family support during early years encouraged and reinforced these types of behaviors that are within one's grasp but not easily achieved.

Figure 1: Percent of Participants' Response Showing Strength at Each Developmental Level



As an individual acquires experience and knowledge, new opportunities reinforce the challenge of leadership, allowing one to gain strength in leadership attributes. Potential leaders expand their repertoire of skills by developing greater confidence, understanding people, willingness to challenge, commitment toward strong relationships, and identification of issues of importance, flexibility, communication, creativity, and persistence. Applying solutions to problems from life's experiences promotes the development of leadership skills and the value of continuous lifelong learning. Teachers, as leaders in the classroom, model leadership skills. As strong relationships and commitment develop, quality teachers begin to perceive the "big picture" of the school's culture and move from isolation in the classroom to collaboration with peers, nurturing the young, reinforcing the seasoned, and identifying with other leaders.

Descriptors of Patterns Developed...

It takes time to master leadership skills and to develop poise to engage the position of leadership and persistence to learn and lead. Leadership skills that develop early gradually mature through experience, challenge, and opportunity. Leadership skills that are slow to emerge are more enduring (Gardner, 1995). In a leadership position the greater the obstacles are to

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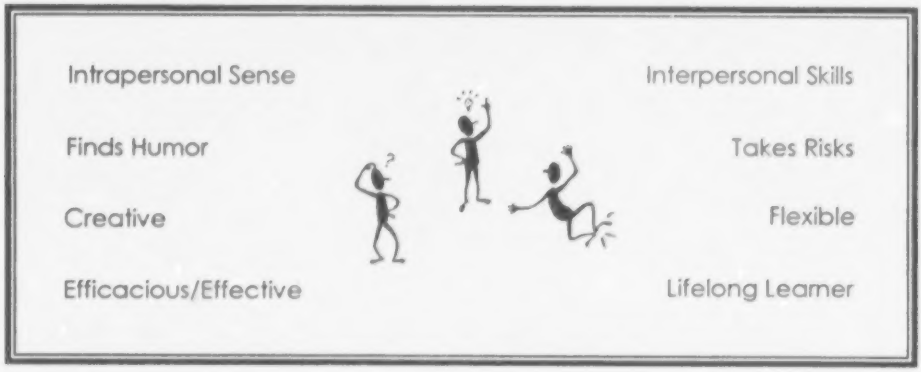
overcome, the greater the accomplishments will be achieved. Efficacious individuals are motivated by impediments, perceiving setbacks as opportunities for growth and change. Teachers in leadership positions are lifelong learners, striving for excellence, thirsty for knowledge, and adaptable toward change.



Attributes of a Potential Teacher Leader

Teachers as leaders indicate the greatest strength in **intrapersonal sense**, having a keen awareness of personal strengths, weaknesses, and goals. An individual with strong intrapersonal sense is conscious of thoughts, feelings, and actions, feels the need to share, collaborate, and help others, and considers the critical role of collegial and family relationships. Having the ability to envision an accurate perception of oneself and using knowledge and experience in directing one's life is indicative of confidence and self-awareness. Descriptors of individuals with intrapersonal sense include responsibility, high self-esteem, integrity, honesty, self-management, and alertness. Within an educational setting teaching is meaningful and important focusing on the overall success of the school. Individuals with intrapersonal sense are willing to accept additional responsibilities and appreciate recognition, respect, and being valued.

Interpersonal skills support working collegial relationships and effectively possess the capacity to understand, communicate, and interact with others. As team members, individuals with strong interpersonal skills serve others by setting aside personal needs to nurture and encourage others to succeed, deriving satisfaction when others excel. As cooperative learners, individuals have empathy by listening with understanding, share responsibility and decision-making by respecting the role and value of others, and build on others' ideas and the resourcefulness of a group by recognizing the need for group adhesion. Although little training is provided for teacher leaders, past leadership experiences allow individuals to perceive worth, uniqueness, and relationships in resolving conflicts through mediation and negotiation to arrive at a decision. Masters of interpersonal skills gracefully accept change and succeed in creating change without coercion and through understanding concerns, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others.

All participants in a learning community are learners. Teacher leaders are consummate learners taking charge of their own learning, developing expertise, and modeling continuous enthusiasm for learning. A **lifelong learner** is able to visualize, abstracting meaning from and applying to a situation or experience. Always striving to learn and having the courage to learn results in achieving knowledge and builds learning at successive levels. As a lifelong learner a teacher leader engages higher level thinking skills, gathering data, applying past knowledge, thinking with clarity and precision, creating and innovating, and finding unique relationships. As a lifelong learner a teacher leader is resourceful and uses the resourcefulness of others to remain open to learning.

Individuals who **find humor** are witty and creative. Humor emancipates creativity and stimulates higher level thinking. Individuals who find humor are persistent problem-solvers taking tasks to completion, yet flexible to consider alternatives. They use humor to relieve tension and are quick to respond in genuine laughter placing value on intrapersonal sense, interpersonal skills, and a sense of humor.

Creative individuals are intrinsically motivated having a passion for what they do. They are highly energetic and tolerant of stress or obstacles to overcome. They exhibit higher level thinking skills through visual imaging making analogies and transforming information and experiences. Personalities of creative individuals become apparent when initiating critical thinking, avoiding overgeneralizations, encouraging accuracy, and deriving pleasure from thinking. As a creative individual a teacher leader seeks out viable ideas, examines options, considers possibilities, generates strategies, and explores consequences. Innovative ideas stimulate the desire to be creative by solving problems, shaping programs, raising issues, or creating change.

Being **flexible** is an important attribute for teacher leaders. Remaining open to learning, listening with understanding, being open to and adjusting to change, and taking responsible risks allow an individual to see the holistic picture. As a confident, creative individual, one can maintain flexibility and control reconnecting and recovering by managing impulsivity while engaged in multiple activities.

Efficacious individuals focus primarily on listening with empathy and understanding and are persistent, taking tasks to completion. As reflective listeners, they spend large amounts of time listening, detecting clues, and relating to the perspective of others. Appropriate use of "wait time" provides an opportunity to consider alternatives before acting and to avoid making hasty responses. As a precursor to action, individuals establish a vision clarifying goals and planning strategies. They are creative thinkers who have a passion for what they do and love the challenge to figure things out. When an apparent problem exists, the problem is analyzed, and a system or structure is developed to attack the problem creating strategies to solve the problem. Individuals are willing to sustain the problem solving process over time, persevering until completion Consequences of alternatives of several directions are considered before action is taken. Steps are deliberate allowing for time to reflect, clarify, and understand as alternative points of view are considered. Individuals strategically ask questions to stimulate others' thinking and communicating.

Thinking critically is the knowledge base for efficacious action. Confidence in these skills challenge inquisitive attitudes and encourage sustaining lifelong learning skills.

Those who **take responsible risks** are challenged, unconventional, and courageous individuals willing to test new strategies or ideas. Responsible risk-takers are willing to confront individuals of authority and are willing to accept confusion, uncertainty, and the high risk of failure. Although risk-takers push the boundaries of perceived limitations, they are thoughtful about the consequences through knowledge and past experience and are aware that all risks aren't worth taking.

Having a healthy intrapersonal sense and strong interpersonal skills support and enhance teacher leaders. Katzenmeyer and Moeller (1996) endorse interpersonal relationships as key determinants of success or failure of teacher leadership efforts. Lieberman (1996), who emphasizes that mutual collegial working relationships are valuable in strengthening teacher leadership, supports this concept. Blasé and Blasé (1994) extend the need for strong interpersonal skills when encountering individuals in positions of authority, creating effective relationships with administrators. Individuals' sense of self creates a melding of intrapersonal and intrapersonal components through understanding and working with self and others (Gardner, 1993). Although specific teacher leadership attributes may be the indicator for successful leadership, they cannot stand alone – the greater strength of each attribute, the greater effectiveness as a leader.

The Teacher Leadership Profile...

1. ...represents attributes that individuals acquire during the developmental process of learning. These attributes, acquired at some time during the teachers' lives, can be used as a model to identify the potential of teachers as leaders. Principals who are reluctant to empower teachers can use this model as a guide to select individuals for leadership positions. The profile model can be used for hiring individuals to ensure commitment toward professional integrity, competency, and learning.
2. ...provides a model for teachers to determine their potential as a teacher leader. Through self-evaluation individuals can examine their own attributes to validate their skills or determine areas of strength or weakness, using areas of strength to augment areas of weakness. In addition, through the identification of areas of weakness, professional development training in teacher leadership can be provided to individuals to strengthen their potential as teacher leaders.
3. ...supports the implementation of a professional learning community. Teacher leaders can be identified to become active in a democratic learning environment and can participate at the ground level of development.
4. ...provides awareness of administrators to realize the potential of leadership skills of teachers adroitly hidden through isolation in the classroom. Often administrators look beyond the skills of their own staff to hire the "expert" to guide and promote programs or concepts of pedagogical nature. The "expert" may be confined to the isolation of the

classroom within the school district, anxious to unleash the knowledge and skills acquired as a lifelong learner.

5. ...allows administrators to become aware of the obstacles and barriers that impede individuals selected as potential leaders. Impediments such as collegial jealousy, power, and attitudes could be addressed with the administration providing support and encouragement, intervening when appropriate. Administrators could become aware of the fear of job security that teachers often experience when stretching the limits of their job description.

Conclusion...

Teachers who are effective leaders, leading beyond the walls of the classroom without being removed from direct student contact, have identifiable characteristics. Data, gathered from interviews from formal and informal teacher leaders, indicate that all aspects of life experiences provide opportunities to acquire the demeanor and skills to assume leadership responsibilities. Findings of the study reveal eight identifiable attributes of teacher leaders, which ascertain the basic components of a teacher leader profile. The teacher leader profile identifies individuals who are creative, efficacious, flexible, and lifelong learners and who find humor, are willing to take responsible risks, and have good intrapersonal sense and strong interpersonal skills. Using a teacher leader profile affords an opportunity for teachers as well as administrators to identify the potential in an individual to assume leadership responsibilities. Thus, teachers showing strength in the teacher leader profile are choice candidates to participate in a leadership capacity to initiate change in an effective learning community.

Leadership experiences in early years provide opportunities for individuals to establish and build confidence, enhancing leadership attributes and skills. Teachers who exercise an extensive influence in the classroom and the school community have exceptional intrapersonal sense and are masters at interpersonal skills. In a learning community teacher leaders encourage shared responsibilities and value collegial involvement through effective collaboration and communication. Effective teacher leaders avoid being burdened with bureaucratic organization and focus primarily on being reflective practitioners solving problems around teaching and learning. As lifelong learners teacher leaders continue to enhance and polish skills, approaching problems as challenges and challenges as opportunities. For true pedagogical reform, teachers need the opportunity to become active participants in school governance as teacher leaders.

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